

Second Member of Council.—

We have no information on that point.

Mr. N. Channappa.—

Will the Government call for a full statement of facts?

Second Member of Council.—

We will make a further enquiry with reference to the facts mentioned by you.

MESSRS. D. S. MALLAPPA and M. BASAVAIHAH (Tiptur Taluk), G. K. MALLAPPA (Tiptur Municipality).—

Q.—41. Will the Government be pleased to state:—

(a) The causes that led to the disturbances on the Kolar Gold Fields during the month of April 1930?

(b) The date on which the disturbances commenced, and the steps taken by the Government and the Mining authorities to quell the disturbances and restore peace?

(c) The date on which fire was opened on the coolies and the reasons therefor; the names of officers who were present on the spot at the time and the names of the officers who ordered the fire to be opened?

(d) Where was the District Magistrate camping each day after the commencement of the disturbances and what are the steps taken by him to quell the disturbances and restore order?

(e) (1) Where was the District Magistrate when the shooting took place?

(2) At what time did he pass orders to open fire and from where?

(3) Was the order in writing or oral?

(4) How and through whom was the order communicated?

(f) What were the reports received by Government every day from the date of the commencement of the disturbances; also the nature of orders passed on such reports and the nature of suggestions given by the Government every day to the local officers?

(g) The action taken by Government and the local officers to pacify the situation after firing took place?

(h) How many casualties occurred as a result of the opening of fire and how many were injured and wounded?

(i) What enquiries have Government made regarding the shooting, the manner and extent of the shooting and the responsibility of the officers who fired; what are the details and the results of such enquiry and by whom was such enquiry made?

SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT, LAW DEPARTMENT.—

A.—41. (a) The main grievance of the workmen was the introduction of the Finger Impression system which the Gold Mining Companies had introduced for purposes of identification of coolies.

(b) The Oorgaum and the Nandydurg Mine workmen went on strike on the 3rd April and the strike spread to all the mines on the 7th. The Press Communiqué issued by the Government in the matter on the 28th April 1930 explains how the strike was ended and peace was restored.

(c) Fire was opened on two days, *viz.*, the 7th and 24th April 1930 at the Mysore Mine and Balaghat Mine, respectively. In the first case a large crowd besieged the Madrassi watchmen's lines and prevented them from going to their work. As patient advice and warning for more than an hour were of no avail, the crowd was declared to be unlawful assembly by the Special Magistrate and asked to disperse. They became more violent and they were ordered to be dispersed by the Police who had only lattas. The crowd who had stones in readiness replied by throwing them and there was soon a rain of stones with the result that some Police officers and men were hurt. As there was a danger of the Government officers and watch establishment officers and policemen being stoned to death, the Special Magistrate gave the order to open fire after due warning. The officers present were the Special Magistrate Mr. V. Vedavyasacharya, the Munsiff Magistrate Mr. S. Krishnamurthi, the Special Superintendent of Police Mr. S. Narayana Rao, the Assistant Superintendent of Police of the provincial Reserve and other Police officers.

In the second case of firing, a large crowd consisting of persons from the Nandydurg and other mines proceeded to Balaghat to intimidate those that had gone to work that morning and to force the mine authorities to send them away. The crowd had gathered there in contravention of the District Magistrate's Notification prohibiting assemblies of more than five persons at public places. About two hours' persuasion and warning by the Munsiff Magistrate

and the Special Superintendent of Police were of no avail and the order to open fire was given by the Munsiff Magistrate after due warning when efforts to disperse them by peaceful means were met with by a rain of stones which they had collected and when an Inspector and some Policemen were hurt.

(d) The District Magistrate was camping at Oorgaum throughout the period of the strike which lasted for 25 days and a few days after that. He did all that was necessary not only to maintain law and order but to bring the strike to an end, meeting the men and the mining authorities day after day and exerting himself in every possible manner to bring about a settlement.

(e) (1) The District Magistrate was at Oorgaum when the firing of the 7th April took place and visited the spot immediately after the incident. When the firing of the 24th April took place, he was engaged with another crowd in Balaghat itself.

(2) He did not pass orders to open fire in either case.

(3) *Vide* answer to (2) of (e).

(4) *Vide* answers to (2) and (3).

(f) to (i) Telephonic communications and reports were being sent promptly and Government were kept informed of every development and instructions obtained wherever necessary. Further details asked for cannot be given in public interests.

Supplementary Questions and Answers.

Mr. K. Changalaraya Reddy.—

It is stated that the cause of the strike was that an elaborate procedure was adopted for taking finger impressions of the labourers. Is it not a fact that such a procedure is adopted in Scotland Yard in respect of thieves? Why was such a thing done in the case of coolies?

Second Member of Council.—

We do not know. You must ask the Management.

Mr. K. Changalaraya Reddy.—

What were all the particulars that the mining authorities required of the coolies under the heading 'antecedents'?

Second Member of Council.—

We do not know.

Mr. K. Changalaraya Reddy.—

Does it not import that all information regarding previous convictions, etc., should be intimated ?

Second Member of Council.—

I cannot say. But at the same time, I do not see any harm in demanding antecedents.

Mr. K. Changalaraya Reddy.—

Why were not the finger-print slips returned to the coolies when demanded ?

Second Member of Council.—

No use questioning Government on that point.

Mr. K. Changalaraya Reddy.—

Who destroyed them and what was the reason ?

Second Member of Council.—

The District Magistrate destroyed them ; that was the best way to deal with them. But in cases where they wanted the slips back, they were returned.

Mr. K. Changalaraya Reddy.—

Is it not a fact that they were not returned even though the coolies wanted them back ?

Second Member of Council.—

If so, the coolies have other remedies.

Mr. K. Changalaraya Reddy.—

Is it not true that the strike did not end because the slips were not returned ?

Second Member of Council.—

I do not think so : it may be your opinion.

Mr. K. Changalaraya Reddy.—

Is it not a fact that the civil officers of Governmen

ordered firing twice, as the Military refused to open fire on technical grounds ?

Second Member of Council.—

We do not admit the correctness of your statement.

Mr. K. Changalaraya Reddy.—

Is it not a fact that there would have been no danger of any kind even if firing was not ordered ?

Second Member of Council.—

We do not know.

Mr. K. Changalaraya Reddy.—

Was it a fact that the Government were giving telephonic instructions to the local officers daily ?

Second Member of Council.—

No. We cannot be telephoning constantly when a strike is going on.

Mr. D. S. Mallappa.—

Were any steps taken by the Government as soon as it was known that a strike was likely ?

Second Member of Council.—

The first information was just before the strike took place.

Mr. D. S. Mallappa.—

At least as soon as information was received what steps were taken to end the strike ?

Second Member of Council.—

Advice was given to both parties and everything necessary was done.

Mr. D. S. Mallappa.—

Is it not true that there would have been no strike if the root-causes were removed ?

Second Member of Council.—

The ascertainment of the root-causes was exactly the difficulty.

Mr. D. S. Mallappa.—

Did not the strike end after the Dewan visited the Fields ?

Second Member of Council.—

Yes.

Mr. D. S. Mallappa.—

If the advice that he gave the Mining authorities then had been given at first, would not the strike have been averted ?

Second Member of Council.—

We gave them certain advice which they partly accepted. But after the trouble, both parties learnt a lesson.

Mr. D. S. Mallappa.—

Why were not the labourers themselves sent for and advised, at the outset alone, as the Dewan did when he visited the Fields ?

Second Member of Council.—

It was not advisable for anyone to go amidst thousands of infuriated persons. When the Dewan did it, it was twenty days after the strike when the grievances of the labourers were exactly known. Even then, panchayets were held and all possible efforts were made to satisfy them but to no purpose.

Mr. D. S. Mallappa.—

How many officers had been wounded before the firing was ordered ?

Second Member of Council.—

We have no information just now.

Mr. D. S. Mallappa.—

Without knowing it, why were orders given for firing ?

R.A.

Second Member of Council.—

The rules regulating orders for firing were followed. °

Mr. D. S. Mallappa.—

Was it not necessary for Government to satisfy themselves that firing was called for ?

Second Member of Council.—

There was a local Magistrate on the spot ; he issued the orders and the District Magistrate reported that the orders were called for.

Mr. D. S. Mallappa.—

Did not the District Magistrate himself give orders to fire ?

Second Member of Council.—

No. He could not be present everywhere.

Mr. D. S. Mallappa.—

Was the District Magistrate consulted before the local Magistrate gave the orders ?

Second Member of Council.—

No ; there was no necessity.

Mr. D. S. Mallappa.—

Did the Government make any enquiries about the strike, independently of the local officers ?

Second Member of Council.—

There was no need.

Mr. D. S. Mallappa.—

At least to allay public dissatisfaction, should not enquiries have been held ?

Second Member of Council.—

We cannot have an enquiry in every case.

Mr. D. S. Mallappa.—

In such serious matters when lives were endangered, was not an independent enquiry called for?

Second Member of Council.—

There has been no death. About 40 were wounded.

Mr. D. S. Mallappa.—

How was that information ascertained?

Second Member of Council.—

Government have received a report.

Mr. D. S. Mallappa.—

Will the Government order an enquiry at least now, in view of the difference of opinion between Government and the public?

Second Member of Council.—

No.

Mr. H. C. Dasappa.—

When, exactly, did the Government know that there was trouble?

Second Member of Council.—

About a couple of days before the general strike.

Mr. H. C. Dasappa.—

When the local officers knew it, did they report to Government or not?

Second Member of Council.—

It was not a matter for the Government being informed about.

Mr. H. C. Dasappa.—

When did the Government receive information from the local officers?

R.A.

Second Member of Council.—

We will place the report at the disposal of the press.

Mr. H. C. Dasappa.—

I am very thankful for that reply. May I know when the Government knew that the trouble arose out of insistence on finger-prints?

Second Member of Council.—

Only after the strike commenced.

Mr. H. C. Dasappa.—

What was the interval between the date of receipt of that information and of the Dewan's visit to the place?

Second Member of Council.—

About 20 days.

Mr. H. C. Dasappa.—

Why did Government allow the strike to go on for 20 days?

Second Member of Council.—

The matter was not in the hands of Government. If the mining authorities did something that was not illegal, it was not open to Government to insist that they should not do it.

Mr. H. C. Dasappa.—

At any rate, if the Government thought that the action of the mining authorities was not expedient, why should the Government have rendered them any help such as despatch of Police and Military forces?

Second Member of Council.—

Certainly, we have got to preserve order in any case.

Mr. H. C. Dasappa.—

Could they not have told the mining authorities that

they would not give them any help because they were doing something that was inexpedient?

Second Member of Council.—

We had to preserve order; so, we could not refuse them help; their action was not illegal.

Mr. Bagamane Devagowda.—

What was the kind of weapon that was used for firing?

Second Member of Council.—

I am not a technical man and do not know exactly the weapons used. But I believe it was Martini Henri rifles that were used, and these are the weapons supplied to the Police all along.

Mr. Bagamane Devagowda.—

What kind of shots were used?

Second Member of Council.—

Buck-shots.

Mr. T. Mariappa.—

How many rounds were fired?

Second Member of Council.—

Quite a number of rounds were fired; but because buck-shots were used, there was no serious injury.

Mr. Bagamane Devagowda.—

Was any warning given to the strikers before fire was actually opened?

Law Secretary to Government —

Warning was given first; but as they did not disperse, orders to open fire were given.

REPRESENTATIONS.—(*Continued*).

No. 19.—Jamabandi Officers to be empowered to grant remissions in cases of scarcity of water due to failure of talapariges and channels drawn there from, etc.

Messrs. P. Nagarajah and G. Sankara Setty, Pavagada Taluk.